The Bethel Courier.

VOLUME XVII, NUMBER 1 SPRING 1993 BETHEL HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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(continued on page 2)

Agnes Straw Mason (1793-1869)
Portrait by Chester Harding

200th ANNIVERSARY OF MRS. MASON'S BIRTH OBSERVED IN 1993

The two hundredth anniversary of Agnes Straw Mason's birth was observed this year during the annual open house in May. Mrs. Mason was born in Brentwood, NH, the oldest child of Lt. Gideon and Mary Robinson Straw on 16 October 1793. Her father settled in Newfield, ME, about 1794 and established his prosperous farm on a hill northeast of Newfield Village. Agnes was the oldest of their nine children. She was educated in Newfield's schools and was a school mistress prior to her marriage.

She met Moses Mason of Bethel when he came in 1811 to apprentice under his brother-in-law Dr. James Ayer, husband of his sister Thirza. They were married in June 1813. He returned to Bethel in April 1813 after receiving his medical certificate from the Massachusetts Medical Society. Research indicates that there was not a suitable carriage for Mrs. Mason to travel to Bethel during the summer of her marriage, so she was forced to wait until "good sleighing." She came to the house that her husband had built for them by sleigh seventy miles through the wilderness. Mrs. Mason's tombstone records that she did not arrive in Bethel until January 1814. She and her husband would live on this site for more than fifty years.

She and the doctor were a popular Bethel couple. Newspaper accounts provide some glimpses of the Masons' domestic life, discussing their numerous visitors and social occasions at their home on Broad Street. Apparently, Mrs. Mason encouraged her two sisters to marry

(continued on page 4)

(Membership, continued from page 1)

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(continued on page 7)

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

The newest Society publication project, *The Richardson Lakes: Jewels of the Rangeley Chain,* is of great personal interest to me. My real introduction to Maine about twenty years ago was at the South Arm Campground, the only such facility on the Lakes. The beauty of the area was without question, the wilderness camping superb, the water crystal clear. Old and new camps were nestled in the woods; people were friendly and helpful; the history of this area was fascinating to this person "from away."

My husband and I built a log cabin nearby and eventually we moved to Bethel from Weston, MA. What a remarkable opportunity to have the cumulative knowledge of this special region published in what promises to be a very interesting book.

Much appreciation is due the Betterment Fund for providing a challenge grant to help the Society in preparing and publishing the book. Now we are looking for sponsors willing to help us with this ambitious venture. Anyone contributing $100 or more will receive listing as a sponsor of the book and receive a complimentary copy. Contributions should be sent to P.O. Box 12, Bethel, Maine 04217 and please specify that the donation is for the Richardson Lakes book. Thanks in advance to all who respond.

Jane W. Hosterman

REFLECTIONS OF A HALF CENTURY

(continued from the last issue)
by Leslie E. Davis

The high water on the Androscoggin River in Bethel reached the high point on March 6, 1936, and was three feet three inches higher than the November 1927 freshet according to a measurement made by Arnol R. Brown and I, on an old slaughter house building on the Herman Mason farm. This building stood just east of the Middle Intervale road at the foot of the hill just south of Arnol Brown's house. We rode all over the fields and right down the highway between the Mason farm and the Grand Trunk railroad. The water was over the railway track just east of the Bethel station, deep enough so that I went over it with a boat and carried Dr. Harry Wilson down to the highway at the foot of Blake Hill where the Chandler Hill road branches off, then he took a car to go to Locke Mills to look after Mrs. Harold Marshall who was about to have a baby. I also carried the mail across the hill by the William Chapman farm to the railroad station in Bethel with a boat and outboard motor for two days as the trains couldn't get through.

Up by the steel bridge across the Androscoggin, the water was over the floor of the bridge and at Bethaven Inn (Editor's note: now the Norsemen Inn) where Henry Boyker lived, the water between the house and barn was too deep for a man to cross it, and very swift so "Arnie" Brown and I tied our boat to a piazza post and took Henry aboard and carried him to his barn so that he could take care of his cattle.

The water was deep enough in the highway in Mayville so that we went along it with a boat and "kicker" as far as in front of the house at Harold Bennett's (Editor's note: now the site of the home of Don and Bev Chase).

(continued on page 4)

SOCIETY SALES DEPARTMENT

The Society maintains a selection of modestly priced gifts and historical publications. These may be ordered at the prices listed below. Maine residents should include 6% sales tax. Orders under $10 should include $1 for postage and handling; those over $10 but under $20 should include $2 and all those over $20 should include $3 for postage and handling.

Moses Mason House Tile $3.50

Stationery (package of ten sheets and ten envelopes) $2 ea.

Moses Mason House — Bethel Railroad Station

Summer House — Bethel Covered Bridge

Booklets

"Bethel's Broad Street" 75¢

"The Family Farm" 75¢

"Made in Bethel" 75¢

"Dr. Moses Mason and His House" $1

"Molly Ockett" $2

Maps and Atlases

1880 Map of Bethel Hill $2

1880 Map of Entire Town (Bethel) $2

1878 Bird's Eye View of Bethel Hill $1

1858 Atlas of Oxford County $7.50

Tote Bag (Moses Mason Museum logo) Sm. $7.50 Lg. $11.50

Placemats, 4 Season (set of four) $7.50

Books

Carrie Wight, A HISTORY OF NEWRY $5

Hutchinson, THE RUMFORD FALLS & RANGELEY LAKES RAILROAD $20

BETHEL, MAINE CEMETERIES $9.50

Russell, INDIAN NEW ENGLAND BEFORE THE MAYFLOWER $15.95

N.F. Little, AMERICAN DECORATIVE WALL PAINTING 1700-1850 $9.95

R. Crosby, FROM AN OLD LEATHER TRUNK $5

W.B. Lapham, HISTORY OF WOODSTOCK, MAINE $19.95

King, THE WHITE HILLS $18

THE WHITE MOUNTAINS: PLACE & PERCEPTIONS $9.95

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MAINE IN THE EARLY REPUBLIC $29.95

Thomas Hubka, BIG HOUSE, LITTLE HOUSE, BACK HOUSE BARN: THE CONNECTED FARM BUILDINGS OF NEW ENGLAND Paper $22.95 Cloth $35

Bennett, BETHEL, MAINE: AN ILLUSTRATED HISTORY $39.95

M.F. King, ANNALS OF OXFORD $48

R. Crosby, I WAS A SUMMER BOARDER $5

A TRUTHFUL LIKENESS: CHESTER HARDING AND HIS PORTRAITS $25

Paula Wight, NEWRY PROFILES $5

Eva Bean, EAST BETHEL ROAD $50

R.H. Bennett, OXFORD COUNTY, MAINE $18

William B. Lapham, HISTORY OF BETHEL, 1768-1890 $45

F.W. Kilbourne, CHRONICLES OF THE WHITE MOUNTAINS $20

T-Shirts

Moses Mason Museum (Adult) (S,M,L,XL) $7

Moses Mason Museum (Child's) (4-6-8-10-12-14) $6

Sudbury Canada 1768-1796 (Adult) (S,M,L,XL) $7

Sudbury Canada 1768-1796 (Child's) (4-6-8-10-12-14) $6

Post Cards: Dr. Mason, Agnes Mason, Moses Mason House 10¢ ea.

Members of the Bethel Historical Society are entitled to a 10% discount for purchases totaling $10 or more. Please send orders to the Society at P.O. Box 12, Bethel, Maine 04217. They will be sent by return mail.

(L.E. Davis Memoirs, continued from page 3)

I have just recalled one or two things that might be interesting to read about in the future.

Back in the years 1931 or 1932, I am quite sure that it happened.

I had built a trailer flat bed to use with one of my trucks to haul logs and pulp and about September 1 we didn't have too much for it to do.

Aroostook County was in the earliest stages of its big potato growing business and each fall about the first of September several men went up there to work during the potato harvesting season from around Bethel. The potato growers there also hired a great many outside trucks. Guy Rice drove my trailer truck and we loaded my Ford sedan on the trailer body and with Jim Croteau, Gardner "Pete" Herrick and someone else who I recall as passengers in the sedan; we started for Aroostook.

We drove all night after a late start in the forenoon and arrived in Presque Isle in the morning. The folks there advised us to go to Caribou so we did, but still no job. We spent about all that day hunting for work and never did find anything for the truck to do, but the men we had with us got a job picking up potatoes by the barrel so they stayed.

About nightfall Guy Rice and I started back for Bethel. We got as far as Lincoln and were so sleepy and tired that we didn't dare drive any longer. We hunted up a room and slept about five hours and came along home.

Another time I sent Guy Rice with my truck and a load of spruce boards for a stepladder manufacturer near Boston and about 9 o'clock that night I got a call from the State Highway Police Barracks at Topsfield, MA that they were holding my truck and load until I brought some money to pay a fine, and buy Massachusetts license plates for it. This happened on Friday night and by the time I got there on Saturday morning, the highway police had taken Guy through the Court at Salem and assessed a fine, which I paid when I arrived, but by that time the license bureau was closed for the weekend so I couldn't buy any license. This was in 1935 and Richard was going to school at Wentworth and living in Concord, MA so I telephoned him and he made a deal with a garage in Concord to bring a set of plates and deliver my load, then drive the truck back to the Massachusetts State line. The State Police allowed us to do that. The charge: Not properly licensed nor insured for operation in Massachusetts.

(to be continued in the next issue)

(Agnes Mason, continued from page 1)

Bethel men and settle on either side of her, Abigail (1799-1874) married John Hastings, the village blacksmith and a founder of Gould Academy; Betsey married O'Neil W. Robinson, a legislator and at one time High Sheriff of Oxford County. Because of the strong influence of the Straw sisters, Broad Street was often referred to as "Straw Street" during those early years.

When Dr. Mason went to Congress in the 1830's Agnes accompanied him since as she wrote a Maine friend from Washington "our happiness, you know, depends on each other." At least one contemporary recorded his impressions of her in this period. John Fairfield, who served in the House of Representatives with Dr. Mason also repre-

(continued on page 6)

BOOK NOTES

The following titles have recently been added to the Society's library holdings. They are available from Heritage Books, Inc., 1540-E Pointer Ridge Place, Suite 300, Bowie, MD 20716 (include $3.00 per order).

THE NEW ENGLAND HISTORICAL AND GENEALOGICAL REGISTER. Vols. 1-12 (1847-1858). The New England Historic Genealogical Society. (Bowie, MD: Heritage Books, 1992-1993. 380 to 485 pp. each. Paper. $25 each)

This quarterly journal, commonly called "The Register," is the oldest, and arguably the best, genealogical periodical published in this country. Its pages (it is currently in its 147th volume) contain some of the most valuable family history compilations and source record transcriptions to be found anywhere. This project to reprint the earliest volumes of this hard-to-find journal allows anyone with an interest in New England genealogy access to an important collection of data, indexed by volume (the Bethel Historical Society also owns an index to the first fifty volumes).

VITAL RECORDS OF RYE, NEW HAMPSHIRE: A TRANSCRIPT OF THE BIRTHS, BAPTISMS, MARRIAGES, AND DEATHS IN THIS TOWN TO THE YEAR 1890. By Kathleen E. Hosier. (Bowie, MD: Heritage Books, 1992. 336 pp., paper. $25)

This invaluable new compilation includes information important for genealogical and historical research for families in and around Rye, N.H., including data concerning vital records events in nearby Portsmouth, New Castle, and Hampton, N.H. The detailed records presented here were taken from microfilmed copies of the original town records, genealogical records of town clerks, and the records of the Congregational church, organized in 1726. An annotated census of 1790 rounds out the book.

HISTORY OF OLD CHESTER (NEW HAMPSHIRE), FROM 1719 TO 1869. By Benjamin Chase. (Bowie, MD: Heritage Books, 1992 reprint of 1869 ed., 733 pp. (1 vol. in 2), illus., paper, index. $41)

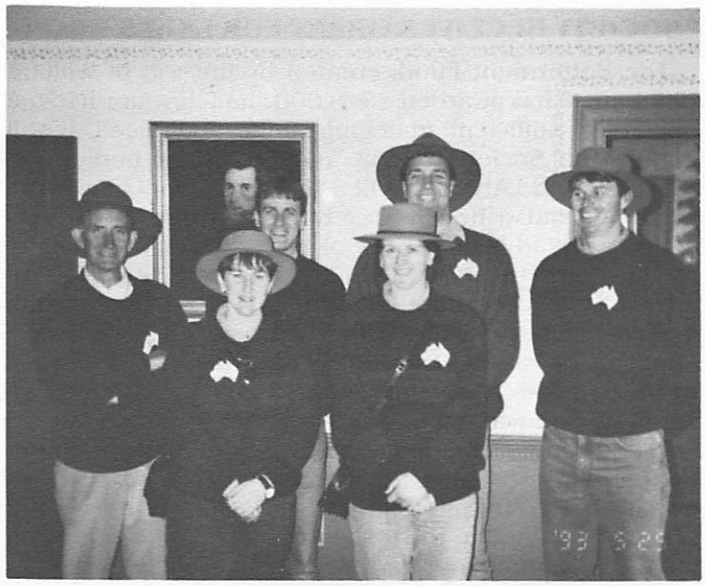
First published in 1869, this history of an interesting southern New Hampshire town is now available again in a new printing, complete with a new index containing over 3,600 names omitted from the original. Mentioning the surrounding towns of Auburn, Candia, and Raymond, this history touches upon many notable events which occurred in Chester from 1737 to 1868. Almost two hundred pages are dedicated to genealogies of Chester families. These primarily trace the male lines through the third or fourth generation.

IN SEARCH OF FAMILY HISTORY: A STARTING PLACE. By Paul Drake, J.D. (Bowie, MD: Heritage Books, 1992. 145 pp., illus., glossary, index, paper. $24)

One of a large number of "how-to" guides for genealogical research to appear in the last few years, this large-format book outlines the various means and sources essential for the study of family history. Though not oriented specifically towards New England research, this guide represents a good "starting place" for those just beginning their efforts. Illustrated with charts, documents, and forms, the book concludes with a glossary of more than one hundred genealogical terms.

HISTORY OF BOOTHBAY, SOUTHPORT, AND BOOTHBAY HARBOR, MAINE. By Francis B. Greene. (Bowie, MD: Heritage Books, 1992 reprint of 1906 ed., 735 pp. (1 vol. in 2), maps, illus., new index, paper. $45)

Incorporated in 1764, Boothbay was one of the earliest settled areas on the Maine coast. Greene's 1906 work, long out-of-print and hard to find, is presented here in an attractive paperback format, complete with a new index and all of its original illustrations. Chapters cover municipal leaders, churches, land claims, marriage intentions (1766-1820), commerce, schools, and the like. Over one third of the book is devoted to family histories, with over 5,000 names in the index. An essential volume for the study of this portion of Maine.



A Rotary Foundation Study Exchange group from Australia visited the Dr. Moses Mason Museum in May.

CHESHIRE AND HILLSBORO COUNTIES, NEW HAMPSHIRE: BIOGRAPHICAL REVIEW. 1992 reprint of 1897 ed., 521 pp., illus., index, paper. $31)

An important reference source for anyone studying the southwest corner of New Hampshire, this volume contains 550 biographical sketches of former residents of this historic region of Maine's neighboring state. In many cases the "lines of descent and kinship" are given for two or three generations and sometimes more, often including maiden names and short sketches of the lives of siblings. A new "every-name" index has been added.

MAINE WILLS, 1640-1760. By William M. Sargent. (Bowie, MD: Heritage Books, 1993 reprint of 1887 ed. (1 vol. in 2), 954 pp., (index, paper. $50)

An essential tool for Maine genealogists, this set contains verbatim transcripts of all wills recorded for York County (then all of present-day Maine) before 1760. Dates of probate, the taking of inventories, and other matters are summarized in footnotes, and the index covers all people named and places mentioned.

THE BETHEL SOLDIERS OF '61

From the pages of the OXFORD COUNTY ADVERTISER, May 7, 1886, compiled by Judge C.F. Whitman of Norway

Four days after the order from Governor Israel Washburn, on the 22nd of April 1861, to the Maj. Gen'ls of the State Militia, ten regiments of troops began to be raised and organized.

Clark S. Edwards received recruiting papers through T.J. Kimball, Esq., the member of the Legislature from Bethel. At the post office on the arrival of the mail, he tore open the envelope and was the first man to sign the roll. The office was full of people, and John B. Walker, C.M. Wormell,

(continued on page 6)

SOCIETY RECEIVES GRANT FOR LAKES BOOK

The Betterment Fund, created by the will of William Bingham II, has awarded a $15,000 challenge grant to the Society. If sufficient matching funds are raised, it will enable the Society to edit and publish a book, THE RICHARDSON LAKES: JEWELS IN THE RANGELEY CHAIN. Compiled and written by Society member Herbert Shirrefs of Spruce Head, Maine, the book traces the colorful history of a portion of the Rangeley Lakes area from its geological formation to its occupation by Indians and, later, by white settlers. Shirrefs' text provides a wealth of information about a wide variety of activities which have had an impact on the Lakes area over the last two centuries; among these are interesting chapters concerning hunting and fishing, sporting camps, steam navigation, and logging and lumbering. Accompanying the author's text are some two hundred and fifty photographs illustrating many of the scenes described in the text. Publication of this informal history is planned for 1994, pending sufficient funding.

A condition of the challenge grant is that the Society must raise $15,000 as matching funds in order to secure an equal amount from the Betterment Fund. In this regard, the Society is initiating a fund drive which will allow it to meet the Betterment Fund's conditions and proceed with the editing and publication of this history of an important section of western Maine. Individuals and businesses/corporations interested in supporting this project should write the Society at P.O. Box 12, Bethel, Maine 04217-0012 or call between 10 A.M. and 4 P.M., M-F at (207) 824-2908. All donations are tax deductible as allowable by law. Those contributing $100 or more will be listed as sponsors of the book and receive a complimentary copy upon publication.

(Agnes Mason, continued from page 4)
senting Maine, (later Governor of Maine) observed that Mrs. Mason "is a real, clever, good Yankee woman. In former days, she was a school mistress, and of course pretty well educated. She dresses well, though a Calvinist Baptist."

During her husband's years in Congress, she met many notables in Washington's social circle. She and the doctor kept autograph books, which have survived. One of the most interesting entries in her book is a poem written by John Quincy Adams, the sixth President of the United States, then serving in the House with Dr. Mason following his presidency. The poem reads as follows:

To Mrs. Mason

What though a stranger holds the pen
To greet thee with the opening year?
Believe him - of the sons of men
None brings a tribute more sincere.

None breathes to heaven a warmer prayer
That all Earth's comforts may be thine
Till passing from this world of care
They brighten into bliss divine.

Whenever this page shall meet thine eye
Let us no longer strangers be;
Be thine the blessing from on high
And in thy heart remember me.

John Quincy Adams

Washington 10 Jan. 1835

During the 1830s and 1840s reform movements swept the nation. One of these was the movement against "demon rum" which gained a particularly strong following in Maine due largely to the efforts of Neal Dow of Portland. Mrs. Mason took up the cause at least by the 1840s; as a result of her interest many temperance meetings were held in her home.

Mrs. Mason and her husband were honored on the occasion of their fiftieth wedding anniversary in June 1863 with a large reception held at their home. A band from Gorham, NH, added to the festivities; Dr. and Mrs. Mason donned hat and bonnet respectively that they had worn on their wedding day in 1813.

They continued to live in retirement until Dr. Mason's death in June 1866; she lived on in the Mason house with her niece, Cyrene, until her death on 6 January 1869. Both she and the doctor are buried in the front row of Woodland Cemetery, Bethel.

(Bethel Soldiers of '61, continued from page 5)
Charles Freeman and many others at once enrolled their names. Riley Plantation had a citizen in that patriotic crowd in the person of Stillman H. Littlehale, who stepped forward and also signed his name. In the course of a very few days, the required number of men had been secured and the Governor noticed the fact. A reply was received that Maj. William P. Frye of Lewiston of General W.W. Virgin's staff would be present to preside at a meeting for the election of officers on the 4th of May. At that meeting Clarks S. Edwards was unanimously chosen captain; John B. Walker was elected First Lieut. and C.M. Wormell Sec. Lieut. The following were Bethel members of the company:

Clark S. Edwards, Captain
John B. Walker, First Lieut.
C.M. Wormell, Sec. Lieut.
Sergeants, W.F. Brown, S.R. Hutchins, J.B. Hammond
S.W. Sanborn, M.D. Walker, Q.S.
Corporals, D.A. Edwards, Jas. M. Evans, T.S. Peabody
Musician Charles Freeman
Wagoners Amos Lapham, W.R. York

PRIVATES

James C. Ayer
John E. Bean
Lewis C. Beard
J.F. Bryant
John S. Brown
D.A. Cook
L.W. Dadlop
Isaac W. Estes
Benjamin Freeman
C.S. Heath
Aaron Jackson
J.H. Kennison
L.W. Pratt
Nelson Rice
L.D. Russell
W.B. Robinson
D.W. Scribner
A.B. Twitchell
Daniel M. Stearns
E.G. Sturgis
John Wormell
Henry Vaillancourt
C.M. York

About a week afterward the company was ordered to Portland where it went into barracks near the city buildings. The Bethel Company was a general favorite in the city. Little musician Charlie Freeman was a particular favorite for his tender years and his skills in playing the fife, attracting great attention whenever the company appeared on the streets. The citizens of Portland bountifully provided for the soldiers' wants in the shapes of baked beans, custard pies, doughnuts and every variety of good food. There were "Boston bean eaters" in those days, as what yankees indeed today are not? They were the recipients of special favors while in Portland, for their good behavior, neat appearance and excellence in the manual of arms. Those were days to be remembered for the scene was soon to change for a soldier's life in all its stern reality without much romance or fun of it. *(to be continued)*

(Membership, continued from page 3)

son, Portland; Vance Richardson, Portland; Gordon Schexnayder, New Iberia, LA; Mary Schexnayder, New Iberia, LA; Stephen L. Sessions, Norway; Dorothy Shirley, Portland; Eugenia M. Spalding, Tewksbury, MA; Dexter M. Stowell, Bethel; Janet Stowell, Bethel; Richard Taylor, Bethel; Sally Rollinson Taylor, Bethel; Robert T. Tewksbury, Cibolo, TX; Regina Thek, Seaford, DE; Richard E. Thek, Seaford, DE; Susan M. Thompson, Ontario; Dr. Taylor Thompson, Boston, MA; Don Tobin, Bandera, TX; Peggy Tobin, Bandera, TX; Valerie Uber, Boston, MA; Joyce Wanger, Rumford; Dr. William H. Wanger, Rumford; Ruth Gavin Watson, East Sullivan; Donna Lee Wells, Fremont, NH; Paul M. Wight, Cumberland; Dorothy C. Wilson, Orono.

Sustaining

Albert Abbott, Buckfield; Herbert Adams, Portland; Roger Adams, W. Simsbury, CT; James Anderson, Newry; Marjorie F. Anderson, Topsham; Nancy Anderson, Bethel; Peter Anderson, Bethel; Mary Arnott, Keene, NH; Kathryn Bailey, Lewiston; Mary Bakeman, Roseville, MN; Danny H. Barker, East Stoneham; Dorothy Bartlett, Bethel; Donald Bean, Bethel; Dulcie Bean, Williamsburg, VA; John Bean, Williamsburg, VA; Karen Bean, Bethel; Richard A. Bennett, Norway; Lewis Bissell, Jackson, NH; Andrea Blake, Albany, GA; James Blake, Albany, GA; Reba H. Bloom, Clinton, NJ; Carl R. Brooks, West Paris; Bernie E. Brown, Rumford Center; Geneva H. Brown, Norway; Martha Brown, Bethel; Maxine Brown, Oxford; Merton Brown, Bethel; Robert Brown, Hanover; Ida C. Bryant, Bangor; Lois Burgess, Bethel; Sumner Burgess, Bethel; Stewart Byron, Madison, CT; Carolyn Campbell, Bethel; Cathy Canavan, Cool, CA; Claire Terry Cantrell, Cumming, GA; Elizabeth A. Carter, Taitou, Taiwan; Greg Carter, Taitou, Taiwan; Patricia Carter, Bethel; Thomas Carter, Bethel; Joshua Chamberlain, Bethel; Frank S. Chapman, Bethel; Jack Chapman, Bethel; Rosalind Chapman, Bethel; John S. Clark, Quebec, Canada; Greta Gould Clifford, Cape Elizabeth; Ellen Coffin, Norway; Liz Como, Bethel; Ben B. Conant, South Paris; Robert B. Congdon, Islesboro; Helen Connolly, Port Ludlow, WA; Edgar A. Coolidge, Quincy, MA; Judith A. Coolidge, Bethel; Victor L. Coolidge, Bethel; Carole Crandall, Bethel; Richard Crandall, Bethel; Brian Dalton, N. Dighton, MA; Rhonda Dalton, N. Dighton, MA; John Davis, South Paris; Linda Davis, Bethel; Theodore R. Davis, Bethel; Mary Morgan DeFelice, Behomia, NY; Gretchen Dock, Newton, MA; James Dock, Beaverton, OR; Nancy Dock, ElCafon, CA; Roger Dock, Glastonbury, CT; Dr. Stephen Dock, Greenville, NC; Carole Duplessis, Bethel; Richard Duplessis, Bethel; Andrew S. DuPree, E. Windsor, NJ; George H. Ellis, Andover; Natalie C. 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Senior

Olive Anderson, Newry; Alberta Angevine, Bethel; Ernest Angevine, Bethel; Carroll P. Bailey, Lewiston; Elizabeth M.

(continued on page 8)

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Individual Preference

Robert J.F. Albota, Ottawa, Ontario; Flora Howe Barnes, Gorham, NH; Donald Bennett, Bethel; Katherine L. Bennett, Bethel; Eva Crumpton, Oxford; John R. Crumpton, Jr., Oxford; Sally Eagle, Carpinteria, CA; Norma Howe, West Hills, CA; Thomas B. Johnson, Bridgton; D.A. Larson, Malden, WA; Donald Marrer, Penfield, NY; Carolyn O'Brien, Bethel; Robert O'Brien, Bethel; Patricia Quimette, West Springfield, MA; Olive Risco, Bryant Pond; John Alley Robbins, Jr., Richmond; Henry Stewart, Boston, MA; Patricia Stewart, Boston, MA; Gertrude D. Urquhart, Dartmouth, NS.

EDITOR'S CORNER

This issue contains coverage of the Society's first Preservation Award selections. It is hoped that the presence of this award to cite outstanding efforts in historic preservation in the greater Bethel area will help the cause. The Society's Preservation Committee will make recommendations to the Board of Trustees each year after careful evaluation of nominees. The Committee also is willing to assist members of the community in providing advice in any restoration and preservation efforts.

SRH

NEW LIFE MEMBERS

Roland E. and Louise Annis, Bethel
Mary Lou Berry, Bethel
John K. Brown, Bethel
Marilyn Parker, Milford, CT
Mary Schexnayder, New Iberia, LA
Joan Trapp Wiese, Bethel
Waldo J. Williams, Milan, NH

IN MEMORIAM

Geta Gould Clifford
Died March 20, 1993, Richard N. Bryant, Life Member
Died March 23, 1993, Mary Cole, Senior Member
Died May 27, 1993, John P. Howe, Life Member

PRESERVATION DAY IN BETHEL
(L-R): John Head and Nancy Harrison, representing the Bethel Rotary, Earle G. Shettleworth, Jr., Director of Maine Historic Preservation Commission (speaker), Patricia Carter, representing the Middle Intervale Meeting House Society, and Arthur Gilbert, Selectman, representing the Town of Bethel stand in front of the entrance to the Dr. Moses Mason House Museum during Preservation Day festivities in May.

SOCIETY PRESENTS PRESERVATION AWARDS

Two awards honoring community efforts in the field of historic preservation were made at a special Preservation Day reception held on May 8 in the meeting room of the Dr. Moses Mason House. Sally Taylor, head of the Society's Preservation Committee, announced that the Middle Intervale Meeting House Society was being honored with a special award for its transformation over the past fifteen years of one of the most endangered and significant buildings into one of the best preserved. Mrs. Taylor noted the organization's painstaking and careful restoration of Bethel's oldest surviving religious structure. Accepting the award for the Meeting House Society was its president Patricia Carter.

The annual award was made to the Town of Bethel for its insistence that any restoration work performed on the fence of the Town's Civil War monument be carefully and painstakingly done in consultation with the Bethel Historical Society. Also honored was the Bethel Rotary Club for its leadership in promoting this project and for raising the necessary funds. Their interest in preserving Bethel's built environment was commended. Accepting the award for the Town of Bethel was Selectman Arthur Gilbert, for the Rotary its incoming president Nancy Harrison.

This award was established by the Society in 1992. A plaque is now on display at the Dr. Moses Mason House, listing this year's awardees. It is expected that the Society's Preservation Committee and Board of Trustees will be making future selections during National Historic Preservation Week.

MEMBER PROFILE
E. Marna McGinness

Born in 1919 in Williamsport, PA, E. Marna McGinness completed her early education there and later graduated from the University of Pennsylvania as a registered nurse. She married James McGinness in 1941 and raised two sons while working as a dental assistant and hospital supervisor in Hagerstown, MD. In 1975, Mrs. McGinness received a B.A. from Alelphi University while she was employed at Mercy Hospital Intensive Care Unit in Long Island, NY. She has traveled widely.

(Member Profile, continued on page 10)

Join the Bethel Historical Society dedicated to preserving and interpreting the local past.

Membership in the Society entitles you to:

(1) free admission to the museum
(2) special discounts at museum store
(3) preferred rate for meeting room rental
(4) special library and archival privileges
(5) quarterly publication
(6) reduced course fees
(7) voting rights in the Society
(8) special invitations to Society occasions

(Please Print)

Name .....

Address .....

.....

..... Signature

..... Sustaining (Individual) $5
..... Contributing $15
..... Patron $30
..... Benefactor $40
..... Students (under 18 years) $2
..... Senior (over 55 years) $3
..... Life over 55 years $50 single
..... Life over 55 years $75 couple
..... Life under 55 years $100 single
..... Life under 55 years $150 couple
..... Individual preference (any amount over $5)
..... Corporate $50

(Member Profile, continued from page 9)

In 1990, she and her husband moved to Bethel to begin a new life of retirement activities. Here she serves as a volunteer for the clothing exchange, the recycling center, Androscoggin Home Health, Garden Club and Friends of the Androscoggin. Her interests include bridge, hiking, biking, gardening and cooking.

Since early 1991, she has been a loyal volunteer at the Bethel Historical Society one day a week, packing books for shipment, assembling photos for the collection, guiding visitors through the museum and helping on many projects and tasks throughout the Dr. Moses Mason House.

FROM THE OXFORD ADVERTISER, 19 APRIL 1895

Hodsdon's dam on Mill Brook went out in the freshet, destroying fully a thousand dollars' worth of the structure. It is doubtful if they repair the dam. We understand the birch will be hauled to Bethel Steam Mill to be worked up. It is hard case for Mr. Hodsdon and very disturbing for all parties concerned.

FROM THE OXFORD DEMOCRAT 30 JANUARY 1877

The mills are running on one third time. The water is low, unless a charge takes place soon, the mills will stop entirely. Mr. E.E. Morse at South Bethel, who received an order last fall, from a party in Boston for some four thousand bed steads, will not be able to fill the contract due to the lack of water.

SOCIETY OFFICERS AND TRUSTEES

Jane W. Hosterman, President; Charles Raymond, Vice President; Walter Hatch, Secretary and Clerk of the Trustees; Rebecca P. Kendall, Treasurer; Trustees: John Bayerlein, Olive Anderson, Marvin Ouwinga, Margaret Joy Tibbetts, Barbara H. Honkala

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ISSN 0749-9108

Earle G. Shettleworth, Jr., Director, Maine Historic Preservation Commission, conducts a tour of the Bethel Historic District during Preservation Day activities.

The Bethel Historical Society
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